Talks with Saudi Arabia

89. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the topics on which talks were held between the delegations of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and India during the recent visit of the King of Saudi Arabia to India; and

(b) the topics on which agreements were signed between the two countries along with the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) The talks covered bilateral and international issues of importance to both countries.

(b) The following agreements were signed:

a. Bilateral Investment Promotion & Protection Agreement (BIPPA)

b. Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement/Convention (DTAA/DTAC).

c. Memorandum of Understanding on Combating Crime.

d. Cooperation Agreement in the field of Youth and Sports.

Justice Kurdukar Commission report

*90. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) the present status of the Ratnagiri Power and Gas (P) Limited (RGPPL) formerly known as Dabhol Power Company;

(b) whether the RGPPL is slated to be commissioned in June, 2006 and if so, whether the project would go on stream on schedule;

(c) whether the prices of gas (feedstock for the project) have soared from $4.00 per million British thermal unit (mbtu) to $10.00 per mbtu which will escalate the cost of production from the original Rs. 3.00 per unit to Rs. 9.00; and

(d) whether Justice Kurdukar Commission appointed to probe the prospects of revived project has submitted its report, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE): (a) As per the restructuring framework finalized by the Empowered Group of Ministers (EGoM), a project SPV in the name of Ratanagiri Gas and Power Private Limited (RGPPL) was registered on 8th July 2005 to acquire the Dabhol Project free of any encumbrances and liabilities through consent route. The project assets have been transferred to RGPPL on 22.09.2005 by an order of Mumbai High Court and the company has taken possession of the assets on 06.10.2005. RGPPL has started activities for revival, restrart and re-commissioning of the Power Project for Commercial Operation.

(b) Out of the three power blocks aggregating a capacity of about 2150 MW, one power block of about 740 MW is scheduled to be commissioned by July, 2006 and other two blocks by November, 2006. However, commissioning of the first of the three blocks are being targeted on best effort basis to take place in May, 2006.

(c) The prices of LNG are presently under negotiation with various prospective suppliers of LNG. The price of gas will have an impact on the electricity tariff which will finally be approved by the appropriate Regulatory Commission.

(d) No, Sir. The Justice Kurdukar Commission of Enquiry was set up by Government of Maharashtra *vide* their Notification dated 7th November, 2001 to enquire into issues related to the erstwhile Dabhol power project of M/s Dabhol Power Company.

The Supreme Court, *vide* its order passed on 9.4.2003 stayed the proceedings of the Justice Kurdukar Commission of Enquiry in so far as they relate to the Central Government. Subsequently, the Government of Maharashtra, *vide* its notification dated 26th December, 2005 has discontinued the Commission from 1.1.2006.

Energy through non-conventional sources

†*91. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR: Will the Minister of NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to make it compulsory for the States to meet their 10 per cent demand of energy through non-conventional energy sources;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the State-wise details of energy production being made by different sources of non- conventional energy;

(c) whether Government propose to increase the production of bio-gas with a view to make villages self-reliant after fulfilling their energy demands; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) A National Programme on Bio-gas Development (NPBD), which caters to promotion of family type bio-gas plants, is under implementation in all States and Union Territories with the objective of meeting cooking fuel requirements. To date, subsidy has been provided for setting up around 3.8 million family type bio-gas plants in the country.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.